

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1-15 (Canceled).

16. (Currently Amended) A fiber optic connector assembly comprising:

a fiber optic connector mounted to an end of and terminating a fiber optic cable and including a ferrule holding an optical fiber from the cable, the ferrule including an end face and having a diameter;

a plug configured to fit about and engage the ferrule of the fiber optic connector, the plug positioned about and engaging the ferrule to seal the end face from air-borne particles; and

an adhesive tape releasably attached to the connector about the plug, holding the plug to the connector,

wherein the plug is made from a thermoplastic elastomer and is configured to deform to fit about the ferrule, and

wherein the plug includes a body defining an inner cavity with an opening for insertion of the ferrule within the cavity, the opening including a tapered entry and a ledge positioned between an inner end of the tapered entry and an inner wall of the cavity, the ledge defining an opening smaller than the diameter of the ferrule and the cavity having a diameter generally the same diameter as the ferrule.

17-18. (Canceled).

19. (Currently Amended) The assembly of ~~claim 18~~ claim 16, wherein the body of the plug includes a larger diameter end opposite the opening and a shoulder is defined between an outer surface of the body and the larger diameter end.

20-22. (Canceled).

23. (Currently Amended) A fiber optic connector assembly comprising:  
a fiber optic connector mounted to and terminating a fiber optic cable, the fiber optic connector including a ferrule holding an optical fiber from the cable, the ferrule including an end face substantially free of contaminants;  
a plug configured to be mounted over the ferrule of the fiber optic connector within a clean room environment, the plug configured to seal the end face of the ferrule from contaminants; and  
a cover for holding the plug to the connector, the cover releasably attached to the plug and to the connector with adhesive;  
wherein the plug includes an inner ledge adjacent an insertion end of the plug, the inner ledge configured to deform to fit about and engage the ferrule.

24-26. (Canceled).

27. (Previously Presented) The fiber optic connector assembly of claim 23, wherein the cover includes a tail to facilitate removal of the fiber optic connector assembly from the ferrule.

28. (Previously Presented) The fiber optic connector assembly of claim 23, wherein the cover counteracts a force from air compressed between the end face of the ferrule and the plug.

29. (Canceled).